



Concerts on  
**CARTER CREEK**

# AROD QUARTET



Photo: Julien Benhamou

**APRIL 1, 2022**

**FRIDAY | 7PM**

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This concert is a collaborative project of Friends of Chamber Music and First Presbyterian Church's Concerts on Carter Creek



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Dear Friends,

Friends of Chamber Music and First Presbyterian Church's Concerts on Carter Creek are thrilled to welcome you to tonight's performance of "real sound magicians," the sensational Paris-based Quatuor Arod. This exciting program presents three distinct styles of composition through several of the best works in the string quartet repertoire.

We invite you to stay for the Artist's Forum after the concert. Please write down questions you'd like to ask the musicians on the forms our volunteers have distributed. We will collect your questions during intermission and ask the artists to answer them at the forum.

This concert and forum have been realized as a collaboration between Friends of Chamber Music and Concerts on Carter Creek. It's our privilege to offer our supporters an opportunity to join us via livestream broadcast. The audience that welcomes Arod Quartet at First Presbyterian Church tonight is nearly doubled by the number of music lovers who view this event online.

We're grateful that the artists of the Arod Quartet were able to provide educational outreach to students of Texas A&M University through a group interview conducted by a group of students at the Department of Communication and, additionally, a presentation they made for the students at the Department of Music Activities.

Concerts offered by the Friends of Chamber Music and Concerts on Carter Creek are free of charge and open to the public.

Friends of Chamber Music organizes educational programs for local schools and colleges and offers music scholarships to high school seniors in Bryan and College Station who plan to continue their musical studies in college, no matter what major they choose to pursue. These programs are possible only through the generous

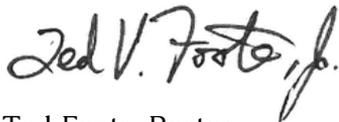
support of our loyal patrons and grants from the Plass Arts Foundation, the Arts Council of Brazos Valley, the Texas Commission on the Arts, and the Nina Astin Winkler Charitable Trust.

Concerts on Carter Creek, begun in 1983 during the pastorate of The Rev. Dr. Robert Leslie, also receives support-funding from the Plass Arts Foundation, and is intended to advance music appreciation and skill among local constituencies of every age.

Most of all, we depend on your love of great music and your appreciation of performance artistry. The success of our programs is a testament to your strong commitment to enriching the cultural life of the Bryan-College Station community. If you are new to our concert series, and you enjoy what you hear, please consider making a contribution tonight.



Andreas Kronenberg, President of the Board  
Friends of Chamber Music



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## Friends of Chamber Music Mission

Friends of Chamber Music brings music from diverse periods and cultures, performed by world-class musicians, to the Brazos Valley. Through concerts and outreach programs at area schools, we strive to enhance the cultural life of the community.

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## Covid-19 Guidelines

With the updated recommendations from the CDC based on the community spread low levels now, we are making masks optional for our audiences. We will continue to recommend patrons wearing them at our events. FCM will adjust the guidelines if the situation changes.

## Student Volunteers

Friends of Chamber Music is grateful for having a team of TAMU student volunteers who help us with greeting and assisting patrons, making photos and videos, recording interviews with the audience members, and digitalizing survey information. Look for them around wearing FCM signature T-shirts!

We thank the TAMU instructors, professors, and lecturers who encourage their students to volunteer for FCM, Travis Albany, Director of Orchestras and Associate Director of Bands, and Dr. Timothy Rhea, Director of Bands, at the Department of Music Activities; Dr. James Balls at the Department of Performance Studies; Dr. Nancy Street, Associate Head for Undergraduate Studies and Internship Director at the Department of Communication; Dr. Donnalee Sullins at the Department of Recreation, Sarks, and Tourism sciences; and Dr. Dale Rice, professor of Journalism Studies.

Tonight's student volunteers are Sabrina Chapman, Zoe Eagleston, Devin Ewing, Emily Hanks, Dale Krum, Nikki Lawrence, Kelsie Malit, Janette Martinez, Makenna Suckow, Audrey Wedemeyer, and Laramie Wedemeyer.

## **Music Presentation**

Today in the morning, Arod Quartet presented a short educational program for the students of the Philharmonic Orchestra class of Travis Almany. Students who take this class are non-music majors pursuing engineering, science, math, and other degrees at Texas A&M University.

## **Group Interview**

The artists of the Quartet participated in a group interview conducted by the students from the writing class of Dr. Dale Rice, professor of journalism studies at TAMU. Each student will write an in-depth story, and the best story, selected by Dr. Rice, will be published on the Friends of Chamber Music's website.

## **Interpreters**

Nathan Bracher, professor of French at the Department of International Studies at TAMU and long-time supporter of Friends of Chamber Music, and Elizabeth Teague, senior modern languages major with a focus in French, helped facilitating communication between the artists of Arod Quartet and students at both music presentation and group interview. Professor Bracher said that it was a pleasure for him to talk with the young musicians from Bordeaux, a beautiful city where he spent three weeks as an invited lecturer at the university.

## **Student String Ensemble**

Prior to the start of tonight's concert, students from College Station High School, guided by their teacher Andrew Nguyễn, (cellists Hannah Jeong and Sasha Ostrovsky and contrabassists Christine Kim and Porto Ortiz-Arrieta) performed music by Brahms, Dietrich, Czerny, Gounod, and Schumann.

## **Forum with Artists**

We invite you to participate in the Artists' Forum after the concert. Write your questions for Jordan Victoria, Alexandre Vu, Tanguy Parisot, and Jérémy Garbarg during the first part of the concert, pass them to our student volunteers during intermission, and then look forward to hear the musicians answering them after the performance!

## AROD QUARTET

1st violin – Jordan VICTORIA (violin by Francesco Goffriller)

2nd violin – Alexandre VU (violin by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini)

Viola – Tanguy PARISOT (composite viola Carlo Ferdinando Landolphi, Pietro Giovanni Mantegazza – 1775)

Cello – Jérémy GARBARG (cello by Giovanni Battista Ruggieri – circa 1700)

Quartet No. 19 in C major, K. 465, W. A. Mozart (1756-91)  
*“Dissonance”*

*Adagio-Allegro*

*Andante cantabile*

*Menuetto Allegretto*

*Allegro molto*

Quartet No. 1 in A minor Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

*Lento*

*Allegretto – Introduzione*

*Allegro vivace*

### INTERMISSION

Quartet in F major Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

*Allegro moderato – Très doux*

*Assez vif – Très rythmé*

*Très lent*

*Vif et agité*

## Quartet No. 19 in C major, K. 465, “Dissonance” Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Mozart had been profoundly impressed by Haydn’s set of six quartets Opus 33 published in 1781. Inspired by these works, he returned to the writing of string quartets after a lapse of ten years. It was between 1782 and 1785 that the six “Haydn” quartets were composed. As musicologist Alfred Einstein says, “Mozart did not allow himself to be overcome. This time he learned as a master from a master; he did not imitate, he yielded nothing of his own personality.” He followed Haydn’s lead in conceiving the string quartet as a four-part discourse, shared by all the instruments. Their respect and admiration being mutual, Haydn was, in turn, to be influenced in his own subsequent quartets by these quartets that Mozart dedicated to him.

The C major Quartet was the last of the series to be composed. It was completed on January 14th, 1785. It’s appellation, “Dissonance,” refers to the introductory *Adagio*’s opening passage. As is usually the case, the composer had nothing to do with this nickname. And, if you’re expecting, because of this name, to be treated to ear-crushing dissonance, of the sort that would make Charlie Ives stand up and cheer; ‘fugettaboutit.’ The “dissonance” occurs in the opening passage; a progression of chords over a pedal point by the cello. While it is a rather chromatic passage, it’s quite within the rules of the 18th-century harmony. So, while it may have reportedly caused a tantrum or two by a disgruntled aristocrat with “sissy ears”, as Ives would say, causing him to tear up the parts, and caused scores to be returned to the publisher, by performers, with corrections indicated, none other than the dedicatee (and no mean musical experimenter himself) Haydn would remark; “ Well, if Mozart wrote it, he must have meant it.” What this opening passage achieves is a deliberate sense of ambiguity. Mozart is keeping us in the fog, rather than clearly establishing the key of C major. With the Allegro that follows this introduction, the fog has lifted and we are in the sunny key of C major.

The second movement, *Andante cantabile*, is considered to be the heart of the work; a lovely, lush, lyrical (forgive the alliteration) work. The third movement, *Menuetto*, is interesting in that central to it is a rather agitated section that places it way out of the realm of a courtly or even country dance. The finale is a good-natured romp ala Haydn, using his type of clipped themes and a device that Haydn was an absolute master of...

...the pause.

—Notes by Joseph Way

## String Quartet No. 1, Op. 7, in A minor Béla Bartók

The Hungarian composer and ethnomusicologist Béla Bartók was born on March 25, 1881, in Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary (today Sânnicolau Mare, Romania), and he died in New York City on September 26, 1946. He began writing his first String Quartet in 1908, when he was 27 years old, completing it in 1909. By that time, Bartók already begun his pioneering studies of Hungarian and Balkan folk music; he was working on his folksong-based *Pieces for Children* for piano at around the same time. He had recently suffered the breakup of an unrequited love affair with a violinist; composing this quartet was one of the ways he worked through his grief. He had written a violin concerto for her; the opening theme of the String Quartet No. 1 recalls this concerto. The Quartet received its premiere in Budapest in 1910, and it was published the following year.

The *First String Quartet* by Bartók is acclaimed for the economy of its motivic structure and for its intensity of emotional expression. Several writers compare it to the late quartets of Beethoven.

It has three movements played one right after another, plus an introduction (Introduzione) to the third movement: *Lento, Allegretto, Allegro--Allegro vivace*. That the slow movement is the first one is unusual in the string quartet literature; Bartók himself called it a “dirge.” A descending sixth characterizes the “sighing” opening motif, which is imitated in fugal fashion in each part, followed by a syncopated rhythm. The harmonies are highly chromatic, but not quite atonal. Parallel thirds in accelerating tempo lead almost imperceptibly into the second movement, which has a four-note motif as its opening theme. A rhythmic bass figure in repeated notes appears later; this figure is common in much of Bartók’s music. A dance-like rhythm in the Introduzione leads into the third movement with its more jocular tone. This movement is the most folk-like of the quartet, though no actual folk tunes are quoted.

—Notes by Felicia Piscitelli

## **String Quartet in F major** **Maurice Ravel**

Even though Ravel worked on his sole string quartet from late 1902 to April 1903, while still a student at the Paris Conservatoire, it is far from a student work. The piece integrates the several styles that he had incorporated into his own musical vocabulary. A major influence was Debussy — particularly Debussy’s Quartet in G minor, with its Impressionist quality and fascinating tone colors. At the same time, the clear and transparent textures, the impelling logic, and tight control of the basic organization bear testimony to Ravel’s strong Neoclassical proclivity and admiration for Mozart. Finally, some of the strange and unfamiliar tonal effects reflect the composer’s interest in the exotic music of the Far East.

The generally favorable initial reactions to the quartet did include some sharp criticism, with a few commentators even suggesting that Ravel make extensive revisions. Debussy, a good if not intimate friend of Ravel, advised the young composer, “In the name of the gods of music, and in mine, do not touch a single note of what you have written in your quartet.” Despite this evidence of Debussy’s support and approval, a comparison of the Debussy and Ravel quartets became a prime subject of newspaper and café debate in Paris, resulting finally in a breach between the two composers. Eventually Ravel was moved to comment sadly, “It’s probably better for us, after all, to be on frigid terms for illogical reasons.”

The quartet opens with a thematic group that contains two distinctive ideas: a rich, warmly scored melody involving the entire quartet and a first violin melody of a similar character over rapid figures in the second violin and viola. After speeding up to a climax, the music quiets, and the soaring second theme is stated by the first violin and viola playing two octaves apart, producing a most striking tone color. Although the rest of the movement follows the regular sonata form, the precise writing, the exciting tonal effects, and the powerful climaxes make this a most impressive movement.

Ravel conjures up the sound of a Javanese gamelan orchestra in the swift-moving pizzicato opening of the second movement by having the outer instruments playing in 3/4 meter (three groups of two eighth notes to a measure), while the inner parts play in 6/8 meter (two groups of three eighth notes per measure). Trills and tremolos create a lustrous sheen as the movement continues. The cello alone plays a transition to the slow, moody middle section. Although they are not exactly parallel, the extremely lyrical themes here seem to grow from the second subject of the first movement. A shortened reprise of the opening section concludes the movement.

Ravel achieves an improvisatory rhapsodic feeling in the slow third movement, with its continually shifting tempi and episodic construction. He is also able, with consummate skill, to weave the opening melody of the quartet in with the new melodic content. As in the previous movements, there is an ever-changing progression of new and imaginative tone colors, a remarkable achievement, considering that Ravel had only four instruments at his disposal, rather than the strings, winds, and percussion of a symphony orchestra.

The vigorous finale opens with an angry snarl followed by a long, held note, repeated twice before the movement starts moving forward. Its awkward five-beat meter, possibly Russian in inspiration, lends it an unsettling character. The rest of the movement alternated the contrasting expressive and lyrical melodies (including returns of the first movement theme) with repeats of the opening outburst.

The quartet, which was dedicated to Fauré, was introduced to Paris by the Heymann Quartet on March 5, 1904.

—Notes from: *Guide to Chamber Music* by Melvin Berger (© 1985)

The Arod Quartet skyrocketed to international attention when they won the coveted First Prize at the 2016 ARD International Music Competition in Munich and went on to serve as a BBC New Generation Artist in 2017–2019. Since then, they have firmly established themselves in performance and on recording at the forefront of the younger generation of string quartets by dazzling audiences around the globe.

An exclusive recording artist for Erato Warner Classics, the Arod has released a trio of highly acclaimed, imaginatively programmed, and immaculately recorded albums since their debut Mendelssohn disc in 2017. Their sophomore release entitled *The Mathilde Album* featured works by three key figures in Vienna’s musical life in the early 20th century – Schoenberg, Zemlinsky, and Webern – and honored Mathilde Zemlinsky (the composer’s sister) who became Schoenberg’s wife and was the dedicatee of his second quartet. Most recently, the Arod released a Schubert album featuring Schubert’s *Death and the Maiden* together with two other works.

Recent and upcoming performances include concerts in their hometown at the Philharmonie de Paris, New York’s Carnegie Hall, London’s Wigmore Hall and Barbican Centre, Salzburg’s Mozarteum, the Konzerthaus in Vienna, Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw, the Tonhalle Zurich, the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, the Oji Hall of Tokyo, and the Berlin Philharmonia.

In recent years the Arod has worked very closely with the Ebène Quartet and the Diotima Quartet and has collaborated with Alexandre Tharaud, Martin Fröst, and Amihai Grosz, the founding member of the Jerusalem Quartet and now the principal violist of the Berlin Philharmonic.

The group takes its name from Legolas's horse in J.R.R. Tolkien's epic *Lord of the Rings* trilogy; in Tolkien's mythic Rohirric language, Arod means 'swift.'

Mécénat Musical Société Générale is the Arod's principal sponsor, and the ensemble is the 2016 HSBC Laureate of the Académie du Festival d'Aix-en-Provence.

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*(in collaboration with Friends of Chamber Music)*

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*Piazzolla, Pitombeira, Barbosa, Yee*



**Friday, December 3, 2021, 7 pm**

A&M United Methodist Church

**NEW YORK POLYPHONY**

*SING THEE NOWELL*

*A Cappella Music from the Middle Ages  
to the 21st Century*



**Saturday, February 12, 2022, 5 pm**

A&M United Methodist Church

**BRIDGET KIBBEY, harp**

**ALEXI KENNEY, violin**

*COUNTERPOINT IN MOTION*

*J.S. Bach, C.P.E. Bach, Saint-Saëns, Falla*



**Friday, April 1, 2022, 7 pm**

First Presbyterian Church

**AROD STRING QUARTET (FRANCE)**

*MOZART, BARTÓK, RAVEL*

*in collaboration with the First Presbyterian  
Church's Concerts on Carter Creek*



**Friday, April 29, 2022, 7 pm**

Annenberg Presidential Conference Center

**RACHEL CHEUNG, piano (HONG KONG)**

*ROMANTIC SPLENDORS*

*Schumann, Chopin, Brahms, Ravel*

Audience Award Winner of 2017

Van Cliburn International Piano Competition